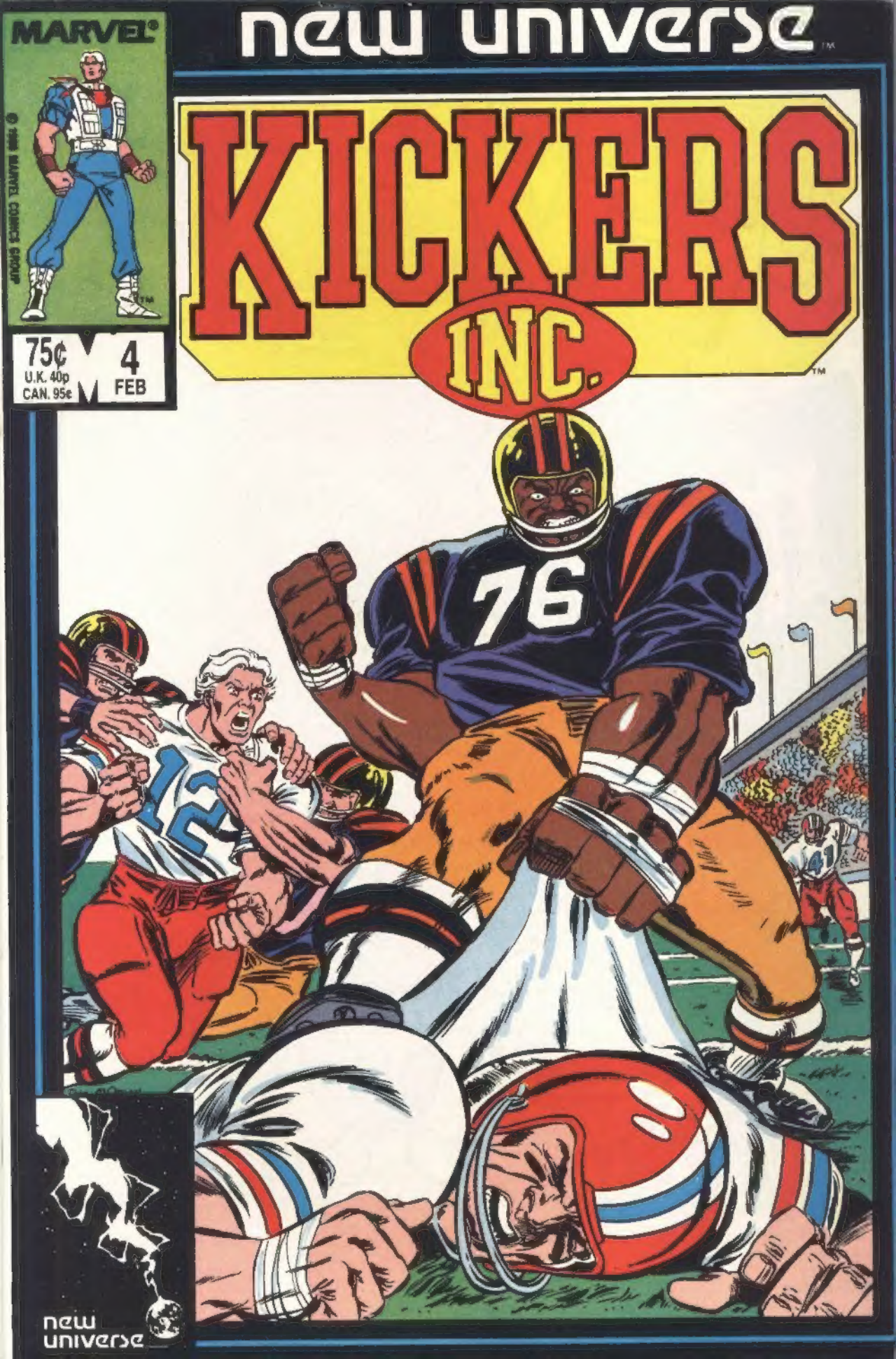
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KICKERS, INC.

THAT'S WHAT THEY CALL THEMSELVES.

IT'S TRUE THEY INCORPORATED AS A WAY TO SPEND THEIR TIME HELPING PEOPLE WITH OTHERWISE-INSURMOUNTABLE PROBLEMS, BUT IT ALSO GOT THEM A LOT OF GOOD PUBLICITY. AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, IT SERVED TO SOOTHE THE CONSCIENCE OF THEIR "GIFTED" LEADER.

COINCIDENTALLY, IT'S ALSO A TAX SHELTER.

HOWEVER, NONE OF THAT MATTERS RIGHT NOW. BECAUSE THESE MEN ARE FOOTBALL PLAYERS FIRST. PRO FOOTBALL PLAYERS. AND TODAY IS AUGUST 3 1986. OPENING DAY OF EXHIBITION SEASON!

THEY'VE GOT OTHER THINGS ON THEIR MIND.

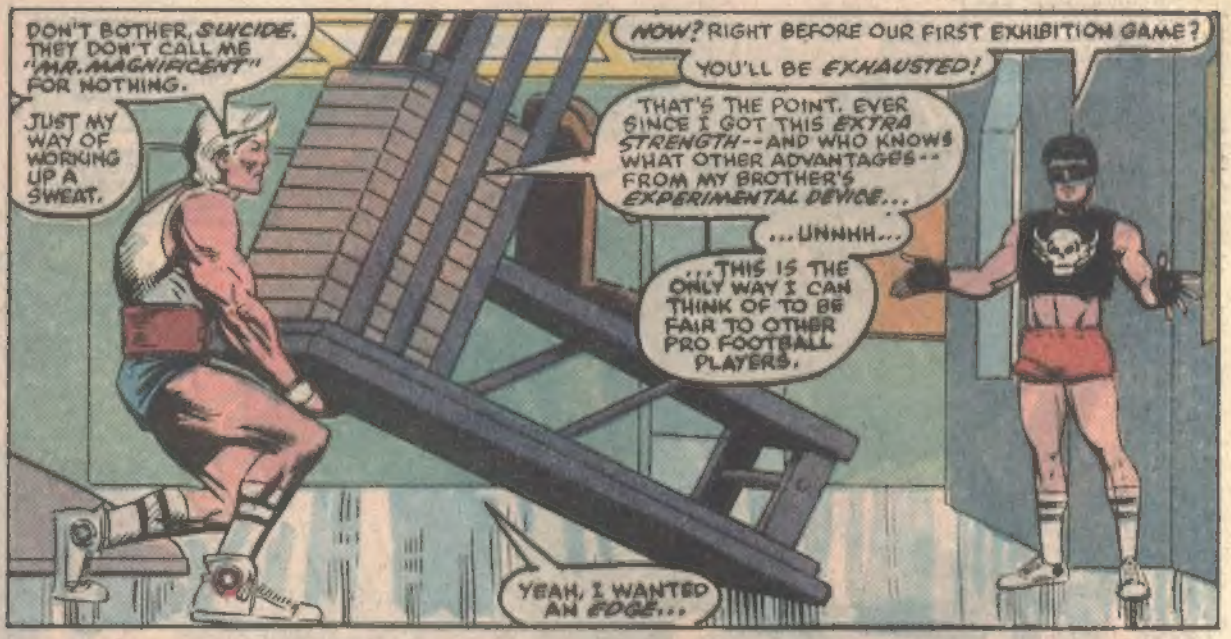
HEY, JACK, HAVE YOU SEEN MY JOC... HOLY--!

HANG ON, PAL, I'LL HELP YOU... I MEAN, I'LL GET HELP...

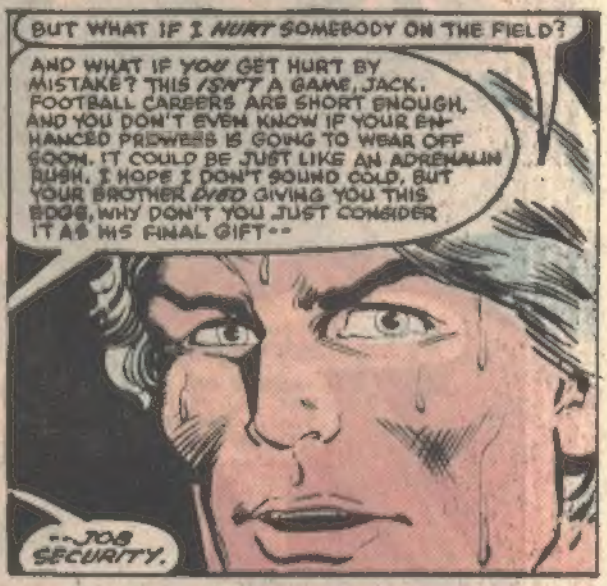
I MEAN... HOLY--!

CRY VENGEANCE!

TOM DEFALCO	TERRY KAVANAGH	RON ALTAVILLE	HOWARD BENDER	ART NICHOLS	JOE ROSEN	GEORGE ROUSSOS	MICHAEL HIGGINS	JIM SHOOTER
PLOT	SCRIPT	ASSIST	LAYOUTS	FINISHED ART	LETTERS	COLOR	EDITOR	EDITOR IN CHIEF


DON'T BOTHER, SUICIDE. THEY DON'T CALL ME "MR. MAGNIFICENT" FOR NOTHING.
JUST MY WAY OF WORKING UP A SWEAT.
NOW? RIGHT BEFORE OUR FIRST EXHIBITION GAME?
YOU'LL BE EXHAUSTED!
THAT'S THE POINT. EVER SINCE I GOT THIS EXTRA STRENGTH--AND WHO KNOWS WHAT OTHER ADVANTAGES-- FROM MY BROTHER'S EXPERIMENTAL DEVICE...
...UNNHH...
...THIS IS THE ONLY WAY I CAN THINK OF TO BE FAIR TO OTHER PRO FOOTBALL PLAYERS.
YEAH, I WANTED AN EDGE...

...BUT IT COST ME THE CHALLENGE!
YOU'RE NUTS, MAN. IF THAT DOOHICKEY HAD GIVEN ANY OF THE REST OF US SMASHERS INCREASED SPEED, STRENGTH, OR RESISTANCE TO INJURY--
--WE'D HAVE TAKEN THE ADVANTAGE AND RUN WITH IT.

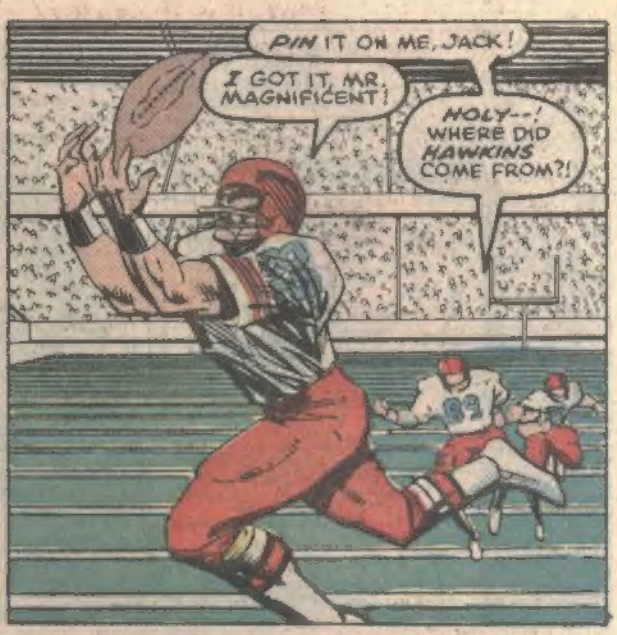

BUT WHAT IF I HURT SOMEBODY ON THE FIELD?
AND WHAT IF YOU GET HURT BY MISTAKE? THIS ISN'T A GAME, JACK. FOOTBALL CAREERS ARE SHORT ENOUGH, AND YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW IF YOUR ENHANCED PREWESS IS GOING TO WEAR OFF SOON. IT COULD BE JUST LIKE AN ADRENALIN RUSH. I HOPE I DON'T SOUND COLD, BUT YOUR BROTHER DIED GIVING YOU THIS EDGE, WHY DON'T YOU JUST CONSIDER IT AS HIS FINAL GIFT--
--JOB SECURITY.

SMASHERS STADIUM, 11:30 AM...
LISTEN UP, EVERYBODY!

IF ANY OF YOU GUYS ARE THINKING THAT THIS IS "ONLY EXHIBITION" THEN I BETTER REMIND YOU-- THERE ARE ONLY SO MANY POSITIONS ON MY FINAL ROSTER.
NOBODY'S GUARANTEED A JOB ON THE SMASHERS.
NOBODY!

I WANT ONE HUNDRED AND TEN PERCENT FROM ALL OF YOU TODAY!
YOU GOT IT, COACH KIRBY!
HEY, DASHER, I THINK THE COACH IS TALKING TO YOU. IF THAT ROOKIE, HAWKINS, IS HALF AS GOOD AS HIS REP, YOU COULD BE LOOKING FOR A NEW CAREER SOON.
AH, HE'S STILL WET BEHIND THE EARS!
CALM DOWN, DASH--AND I'M TALKING TO ALL OF YOU, SMYTHE! IF YOU INTERRUPT ME ONE MORE TIME, YOU'LL BE LOOKING AT A TWO HUNDRED DOLLAR FINE!
NOW, LINE UP AS I READ OFF YOUR NAMES. DUDLINSKI, WILLIAMS...
UH-OH.
...BALDI AND MONAHAN-
I DON'T LIKE THIS ANY MORE THAN THE REST OF YOU BUT IT'S GOTTA BE DONE, THANKS TO RECENT MEDIA HYPE--
--AND THE REAL LIVE SCREW-UPS OF SOME PROS WHO DIDN'T RECOGNIZE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THEIR POSITIONS--
--WE START RANDOM DRUG TESTS TODAY.
WILLIAMS
77
MONAHAN
THANK YOU VERY MUCH, MERCURY MORRIS.
I DON'T WANNA HEAR ANY GRUMBLING. THE "REQUEST" CAME FROM THE OWNER, SO GET USED TO IT. NOW, GRAB A CUP...AND FILL IT UP!
KIRBY'S GOTTA BE KIDDING. THIS IS AN INVASION OF PRIVACY. IF I GET CALLED, I WON'T STAND FOR IT. NONE OF US SHOULD.
ACTUALLY, I'M ALL FOR IT. I'M CLEAN, BUT THESE DAYS IT SEEMS LIKE THE ONLY WAY TO KEEP THE GAME HONEST. I MEAN, WE'RE MEDIA STARS--AS SPORTS FIGURES AS WELL AS KICKERS, INCERS -- WE'VE GOT TO SET AN EXAMPLE. YOU COULD ALMOST SAY THAT ATHLETES BROUGHT THIS ON THEMSELVES.
THAT'S RIDICULOUS, BRICK. YOU'RE OLD ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT ONE BAD APPLE DOESNT...
HAH! IF I DIDN'T KNOW BETTER, I'D THINK YOU GUYS HAD SOMETHING TO HIDE. WHAT DO YOU THINK, JACK?
JACK? YO, JACK?
IT WON'T STOP HERE EITHER, BRICK. I HEARD THAT THE UNION'S BEEN TALKING ABOUT TESTING FOR STEROIDS NEXT...
I SAID NO GRUMBLING! TWO HUNDRED BUCKS, SMYTHE!
12
JUST WHAT I NEED. IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME TILL THE FOOTBALL COMMISSION DETECTS MY LITTLE "EDGE!"
WHAT HAPPENS THEN?

THE SMASHERS TAKE THE FIELD FOR WARM-UPS.
MAN, IT'S GONNA FEEL GOOD TO PLAY COMPETITIVE FOOTBALL AGAIN!
HEY, DASHER-- COMING AT YOU, BUDDY!


PIN IT ON ME, JACK!
I GOT IT, MR. MAGNIFICENT!
HOLY--! WHERE DID HAWKINS COME FROM?!

JACK, ARE ALL THOSE STORIES ABOUT THE WRECKERS TRUE?
YOU KNOW IT, BALDI. THESE GUYS PLAY ROUGH--REAL DOWN AND DIRTY. BUT WE'LL BEAT THEM BY JUST PLAIN PLAYING BETTER FOOTBALL!
YOU SHOULD WATCH OUT FOR ONE PARTICULAR LINEBACKER, THOUGH...

..."UGLY" MACK THORNTON--YOU'LL KNOW HIM WHEN YOU SEE HIM."
"EVEN THE OTHER WRECKERS AVOID HIM WHEN THEY CAN."
ALL RIGHT, GUYS, LET'S...

...KILL THE ROOKIE!
BAM
GRIND
SMASH

NICE WAY TO TREAT A TEAMMATE!
REAL PROFESSIONAL!
IGNORE THEM. THEY THINK THEY CAN WIN A FOOTBALL GAME THROUGH INTIMIDATION. WE KNOW BETTER.
REMEMBER, WE'RE PLAYING THE WRECKERS AGAIN FIRST GAME OF REGULATION BALL--LET'S WHIP 'EM NOW SO THEY'RE USED TO IT BY THEN!
ALL RIGHT, LET'S GO!

LATE IN THE FINAL QUARTER...
..AND IT'S A HAND-OFF TO SUICIDE SMYTHE ON AN END-AROUND THE RIGHT SIDE..."
"OOOH, WHAT A HIT!"
" THE WRECKERS CRUSH THE HALFBACK FOR A THREE YARD LOSS."
"THAT ONE LOOKED PAINFUL, FOLKS!"
HEY, REF, WATCH THOSE LATE HITS! THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE A GAME!
WHAT DID YOU EXPECT FROM THOSE GORILLAS--ETIQUETTE? C'MON, SUICIDE, LET'S PLAY FOOTBALL!
" IT'S SECOND AND THIRTEEN ON THEIR OWN FORTY-FIVE YARDLINE AS THE SMASHERS HUDDLE UP..."
"AND KIRBY'S SENDING IN THE ROOKIE, HAWKINS. COULD IT BE? WE'RE FINALLY GOING TO GET TO SEE THE SMASHERS' FIRST ROUND DRAFT CHOICE STRUT HIS STUFF...
COACH SAYS TO TRY THE NEW PLAY-- DOUBLE WIDE-OUT DEEP.
OK, YOU HEARD IT-- WE'LL GO ON 2.
LET'S MOVE!
" 'MR. MAGNIFICENT JACK MAGNICONTE STEPS BACK IN THE POCKET--
"--HE'S GOT DASHER CORBIN WIDE OPEN DEEP ON THE RIGHT SIDE..."
"COULD IT BE? COULD IT BE?"

"... OOOH, RIGHT THROUGH HIS FINGERTIPS!"
"WHAT A SHAME, FOLKS. THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NO ONE BETWEEN CORBIN AND THE GOAL LINE, BUT HE JUST COULDN'T SEEM TO HOLD ON TO THE BALL..."
LET'S TRY IT AGAIN.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, DASHER. I'VE BEEN FOLLOWING YOUR CAREER FOR YEARS AND, IF ANYBODY'S EARNED THE RIGHT TO A COUPLE OF MISTAKES, YOU HAVE...
HE SAYS ONE MORE WORD AND I'LL KILL HIM. I SWEAR, I'LL KILL HIM!
UH-OH, HAWKINS BETTER SHUT UP. PRE-GAME FOUL-UPS ARE ONE THING, BUT THIS IS DIFFERENT--
C'MON, DASH, LET'S PLAY FOOTBALL!
"THIRD AND LONG WITH FOUR MINUTES TO GO IN THE GAME AS THE SMASHERS RETURN TO THE LINE..."
READY, SET...
HUT...
HUT...
"THE WRECKERS ARE AHEAD 17-13. A FIELD GOAL WON'T MAKE THE DIFFERENCE SO THE SMASHERS ARE GONNA HAVE TO GO FOR A TOUCHDOWN!"
"COULD IT BE? IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE RUNNING THE SAME PLAY AGAIN! MAGNICONTE STEPS BACK... THIS TIME HE LOOKS LEFT..."
"HE'S GOT HAWKINS IN THE CLEAR WAY DOWN THE SIDELINES..."
"COULD IT BE...? COULD IT BE...?"
82
"...YES!"
"IT IS! IT IS!-- TOUCHDOWN, SMASHERS!"
HAWKINS! HAWKINS! HAWKINS!
"THIS LOOKS LIKE THE START OF A GREAT CAREER FOR HAWKI..."

"JEEZ--A LATE HIT BY THORNTON..."

SNAP

"OH MY-- COULD IT BE...?"

WITHIN MINUTES...

I CAN'T BELIEVE THERE WAS NO *PENALTY* ON THAT PLAY, JACK.

WHAT, THEY'RE *LAUGHING*?

LAUGHING!

WHAT KIND OF *MONSTERS* ARE THEY?

HA! HA! HA!

HA! HA!

YOU GUYS THINK IT'S *FUNNY*?

THORNTON, YOU'RE DEAD MEAT!

OOF!

OUTTA MY WAY!

HOLD IT, MAGNICONTE!

WHEEEEEEET

I SAID "HOLD IT"!

THE WHISTLE JERKS JACK BACK TO REALITY...

...SECONDS SHORT OF MURDER.

HE'S NOT WORTH IT.

MAGNICONTE, YOU'RE OUT OF THE GAME!

HAH! WHAT'S THE MATTER, "MR. MAGNIFICENT"? YOU AFRAID OF THE REF?

ANOTHER WORD OUT OF YOU, THORNTON, AND YOU'LL JOIN HIM.

HE'S NOT WORTH IT. HE'S NOT WORTH IT. HE'S NOT WORTH IT...

...YET!

AUGUST 27TH--THE NORMALLY TRANQUIL SUBURBAN RESIDENCE OF JACK AND DARLENE MAGNICONTE...

NO.

NO.

NO!

SNAP

NOT ANOTHER NIGHTMARE, JACK?

THE SAME ONE. THAT POOR KID--HIS SPINE WAS BROKEN--HE'LL BE PARALYZED FROM THE WAIST DOWN FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE. AND THE PLAY WAS ALREADY OVER WHEN THORNTON HIT HIM. I KNOW IT WAS. I SAW IT...

DARLENE, HE WAS ONLY TWENTY-TWO YEARS OLD...

TROUBLE. I KNOW WHAT HAPPENS WHEN HE GETS THIS WAY...

YOU'RE THINKING OF PAYING HIM BACK FOR WHAT HE DID, AREN'T YOU, JACK? YOU CAN'T, YOU KNOW. NOT ANYMORE.

WHY NOT? TWO CAN PLAY AT HIS GAME. WHEN WE MEET THE WRECKERS AGAIN ON OPENING DAY, I JUST MIGHT DIVE INTO THEM, NO HOLDS BARRED--

--ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO NUMBER 76, "UGLY" MACK THORNTON!

I ONLY WANT JUSTICE, DARLENE.

YOU WANT VENGEANCE, JACK. AND WITH YOUR STRENGTH IT WOULD BE MURDER!

I KNOW.

KRAK

THE NEXT MORNING, SMASHERS STADIUM...

DO YOU THINK COACH KIRBY WILL START YOU THIS WEEKEND OR *SAVE YOU* FOR OPENING DAY?

I HOPE I'LL GET TO PLAY...

OF COURSE H—

I THINK THE OPENING GAME IS GONNA TURN INTO A *GRUDGE MATCH?*

I...

HAVE THE SMASHERS FOUND A *REPLACEMENT* FOR HAWKINS YET?

YOU OR KIRBY GOT ANYTHING *SPECIAL* PLANNED FOR THORNTON WHEN YOU MEET HIM ON THE FIELD AGAIN?

KIRBY'S GOT *NO COMMENT* AND NEITHER DOES ANY-ONE ELSE ON MY TEAM-- *IF* THEY WANT TO *KEEP* THEIR NICE, CUSHY *JOBS!*

SORRY, COACH.

QUESTION AND ANSWER TIME IS *OVER!* THEY'LL BE PLENTY OF TIME TO WORRY ABOUT THE WRECKERS WHEN WE WHIP *L.A.* THAT IS, IF YOU DON'T MIND MY BORROWING MY *STAR QUARTERBACK* FOR SOME PRACTICE SESSIONS?

JUST ONE MORE--

ALL OF YOU-- *OUT OF HERE... NOW!*

AND *YOU*, MAGNICONTE-- YOU NEED AS MUCH PRACTICE AS ANYONE ON THIS TEAM.

LATELY, YOU'VE BEEN THROWING SHORT PASSES *TOO NOT* FOR YOUR OWN MEN TO HANDLE. *CONTROL* IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN BRUTE FORCE, JACK, AND I'M GONNA TEACH YOU *"FINESSE"...*

"...IF I HAVE TO *BEAT* IT INTO YOU!"

THWIT

HOLY--!

WHAT HAPPENED?!

I'M NOT SURE, BUT WE'VE GOT IT ALL ON TAPE. WE'LL CHECK IT OUT BACK IN THE STUDIO.

HEY JACK, YOU CATCH SUICIDE'S MOVES ON THAT LAST OFF-TACKLE? HIS GRANDMOTHER COULD'VE GOTTEN TO THE BALL QUICKER

GIMME A *BREAK*, BRICK, PRACTICE IS OVER. IT'S TIME TO *PARTY!*

AND I GOT TWO *HOT ONES* LINED UP FOR ME AND MY BUDDY, DASH, AT THE HARD ROCK CAFE TONIGHT

AT IT AGAIN, SUICIDE?

YOU GUYS SHOULD *COME ALONG*. I'LL BRING MY GRANDMOTHER FOR YOU BRICK, BUT I DOUBT YOU COULD KEEP *UP* WITH HER.

WHAT THE--!?

VERY *FUNNY*, GUYS.

WHAT'S THE *PROBLEM*, JACK?

SORRY, MY MISTAKE. IT'S JUST A LITTLE GIFT FROM THE FOOT GANG.

THOSE TERRORISTS? I THOUGHT WE TOOK CARE OF THEM IN THE OFF-SEASON.

SO DID I, SINCE THEIR ENTIRE HEADQUARTERS WAS DESTROYED IN AN *EXPLOSION*. THIS MUST BE FROM ONE OF THEIR *STRAGGLERS*.

JUST FORGET ABOUT IT

THE THING WITH THE BALL... AND NOW THIS. IT'S JUST *ME* THEY'RE AFTER! NO SENSE TELLING THE OTHER GUYS, THERE'S SOME *SERIOUS FOOTBALL* COMING UP AND IT WOULD ONLY DISTRACT THEM.

BUT IF FOOT *IS* BACK

...WHAT *NEXT*?

LATER THAT NIGHT...

HEY, ISN'T THAT MR. MAGNIFICENT OF THE SMASHERS?

NO IT'S JACK MAGNICONTE OF KICKERS, INC.

RIGHT THIS WAY, MR. SMYTHE.

EXCUSE ME, SIR, I KNOW JACKIE O.

EXCUSE ME, SIR, I AM JACKIE O.

I SEE YOU APPRECIATE THE *ADVANTAGES* OF SUPER-STARDOM, SUICIDE.

LOOKS LIKE YOUR "HOT ONES" DECIDED TO *MISS* THE WHOLE GAME, EH, SUICIDE?

DON'T WORRY, IT'S *EARLY* YET. THE BABES'LL SHOW!

WHAT CAN I GET YOU, SUICIDE?

GUESS WE'LL START WITH A ROUND OF *BUDS*...

MAKE MINE AN *ORANGE JUICE*.

RIGHT.

YOU KNOW, I *SAW* THAT NOTE, JACK.

NICE HAND-WRITING, HUH?

STOP PLAYING IT *DOWN*, PAL. THEY'RE COMING AFTER YOU, AND WE CAN'T ALWAYS BE THERE TO *HELP*.

YEAH, LAST TIME YOU WOULD'VE BEEN IN SERIOUS *TROUBLE* IF IT WEREN'T FOR THE REST OF US, RIGHT, BRICK?

RIGHT, SUICIDE.

MAYBE IT'S TIME WE CALLED IN THE *PROPER AUTHORITIES* JACK, THESE GUYS PLAY JUST LIKE THE *WRECKERS*.

WE *CAN'T*, BRICK, AND YOU KNOW WHY.

OF COURSE, ME AND DOLL LAID DOWN THE COVERING FIRE FOR JACK.

DARLENE *HATES* IT WHEN I CALL HER THAT, RIGHT, JACK?

RIGHT, SUICIDE.

WE SHOULD HAVE GONE TO THE *POLICE* THE FIRST TIME WE TANGLED WITH FIST, BRICK, BUT IT PROBABLY WOULD'VE MEANT REVEALING MY "*EDGE*" TO THE WORLD.

ONE THING I DO KNOW, BRICK, I DON'T WANT DARLENE TO KNOW ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TODAY, SO I'D LIKE TODAY'S THREAT TO REMAIN OUR LITTLE *SECRET*.

HEY, DASH, YOU WITH US? CHIME IN ANYTIME.

SORRY, I WAS...THINKING OF SOMETHING ELSE.

C'MON, BUDDY. ISN'T THIS THE PART OF THE EVENING WHERE WE'RE SUPPOSED TO DRINK UP AND *REMINISCE* ABOUT THE GOOD OL' DAYS?

I'LL DRINK TO THAT. HERE'S TO OUR PAST *SUCCESSES* AND OUR FUTURE *SUCCESS* AGAINST THE WRECKERS NEXT WEEK!

SOON
I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS BRICK, BUT HE SURE HASN'T BEEN HIMSELF LATELY
SOMETHING'S UP WITH DASH. HOPE IT'S NOTHING SERIOUS.
YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN! IT'S DEFINITELY NOT LIKE HIM TO LET SUKE DE TAKE OFF WITH THOSE GIRLS ALONE.
I THINK I'LL HAVE A WORD WITH HIM.
GOOD IDEA, JACK. COACH HAS A ROUGH DAY PLANNED FOR US TOMORROW. I NEED TO GO HOME AND GET MY BEAUTY SLEEP.
DASHER, HOLD UP A MINUTE, I'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU.
I'M SORTA BEAT, JACK
LISTEN, DASHER, YOU CAN'T BLAME YOURSELF FOR WHAT THORNTON DID TO HAWKINS IT'S NOT LIKE IT WAS YOUR FAULT.
I DON'T BLAME MYSELF, JACK.
COME ON PAL, YOU'VE BEEN WALKING AROUND LIKE A ZOMBIE SINCE THAT GAME
YOU JUST DON'T GET IT, DO YOU, JACK?
I DON'T FEEL ANYTHING FOR HAWKINS -- GOOD OR BAD I KEEP THINKING "BETTER HIM THAN ME"
THAT'S WHAT'S BOTHERING ME JACK I'M ...ASHAMED.
I THOUGHT I WAS BETTER THAN THAT.
SOUNDS TO ME LIKE YOU'RE JUST HUMAN DASHER, WITH FEELINGS AND FAULTS. YOU'VE GOT NOTHING MORE TO BE ASHAMED OF THAN ANYONE ELSE.
EASY TO SAY, JACK BUT I DON'T KNOW..
I KNOW! YOU SHOULDN'T BE SO HARD ON YOURSELF DASH, YOU'RE ONE OF THE GOOD GUYS.
JACK MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT, HAWKINS LOVED [illegible] AND I'VE FELT NO SORRY FOR MYSELF AND STARTED PLAYING FOOTBALL AGAIN
THAT'S ALL I WANTED TO HEAR, BUDDY! HA, HA.
WHOA! WATCH IT, JACK, YOU'LL WRINKLE MY WRINKLE-PROOF CAMELHAIR COAT.
YOU DON'T KNOW YOUR OWN STRENGTH YET!

COULD IT BE--? YESSSS! A 26-YARD FIELD GOAL BY YURI PLODLINSKI IN THE LAST PLAY OF THE GAME!

THE SMASHERS WIN THEIR LAST PRE-SEASON GAME, BRINGING THEIR RECORD TO 3-1. THEY'RE IN GOOD SHAPE GOING INTO THEIR SEASON OPENER

THE WRECKERS HAVE DONE IT! 35-17!

THEY END THE PRE-SEASON WITH A PERFECT RECORD AND READY FOR NEXT WEEK'S GRUDGE MATCH AGAINST THE SMASHERS.

LOOKING GOOD OUT THERE TODAY, DASH

YEAH, AND IT FELT GOOD TODAY. BUT I CAN'T WAIT FOR ANOTHER CHANCE AGAINST THE WRECKERS

SO, READY TO HIT THE TOWN WITH ME TONIGHT-- SCORE A FEW POINTS OFF THE FIELD?

WHY DON'T YOU SAVE YOUR ENERGY FOR THE WRECKERS, SUICIDE?

DON'T WORRY BRICK I'LL BE READY FOR THOSE GUYS

I DON'T WANNA JUST BEAT 'EM I WANNA TEACH THOSE GUYS A LESSON THEY'LL NEVER FORGET

I DON'T WANNA TEACH 'EM NOTHING.

I WANT BLOOD!

NOW YOU'VE DONE IT BRICK

WELL, YOU WON'T GET BLOOD FROM A LOCKER, ROOKIE -- SAVE IT FOR THE WRECKERS!

FREEZE, MISTER!

DAY OF VENGEANCE DRAWS NEAR

WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?

UMM... THE BATHR

I WANT TO KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU BOYS ARE PLANN NG FOR SUNDAY, JACK?

AW, C'MON, DARLENE, THAT'S JUST THE PAPER'S WAY OF HYPING THE GAME.

DON'T LIE TO ME, JACK YOU CAN'T USE THE SAME TACTICS ON ME THAT YOU USE ON REPORTERS I'M YOUR WIFE, I WON'T BE BRUSHED OFF LIKE THAT.

I'M JUST TRYING TO STOP YOU FROM DOING SOMETHING WE BOTH KNOW YOU'LL REGRET. YOU HAVE POWER YOU CAN'T FULLY CONTROL, JACK IF YOU STEP OUT ON THAT FIELD IN THIS STATE OF MIND, YOU'LL BE MORE DANGEROUS THAN THORNTON COULD EVER BE!

YOU HATE THE MAN. WHY DO YOU INSIST ON ACTING JUST LIKE HIM?

I..

FORGET IT. WHAT ELSE COULD I EXPECT FROM A DUMB JOCK?

DARLENE--!

I'M SORRY, JACK, YOU KNOW I DIDN'T MEAN IT. IT'S JUST THAT I LOVE YOU SO MUCH AND I DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOU TO SOME SILLY, MACHO CRUSADE.

I DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOU, EITHER, DARLENE, YOU'RE THE ONLY STABLE THING IN MY LIFE THESE DAYS

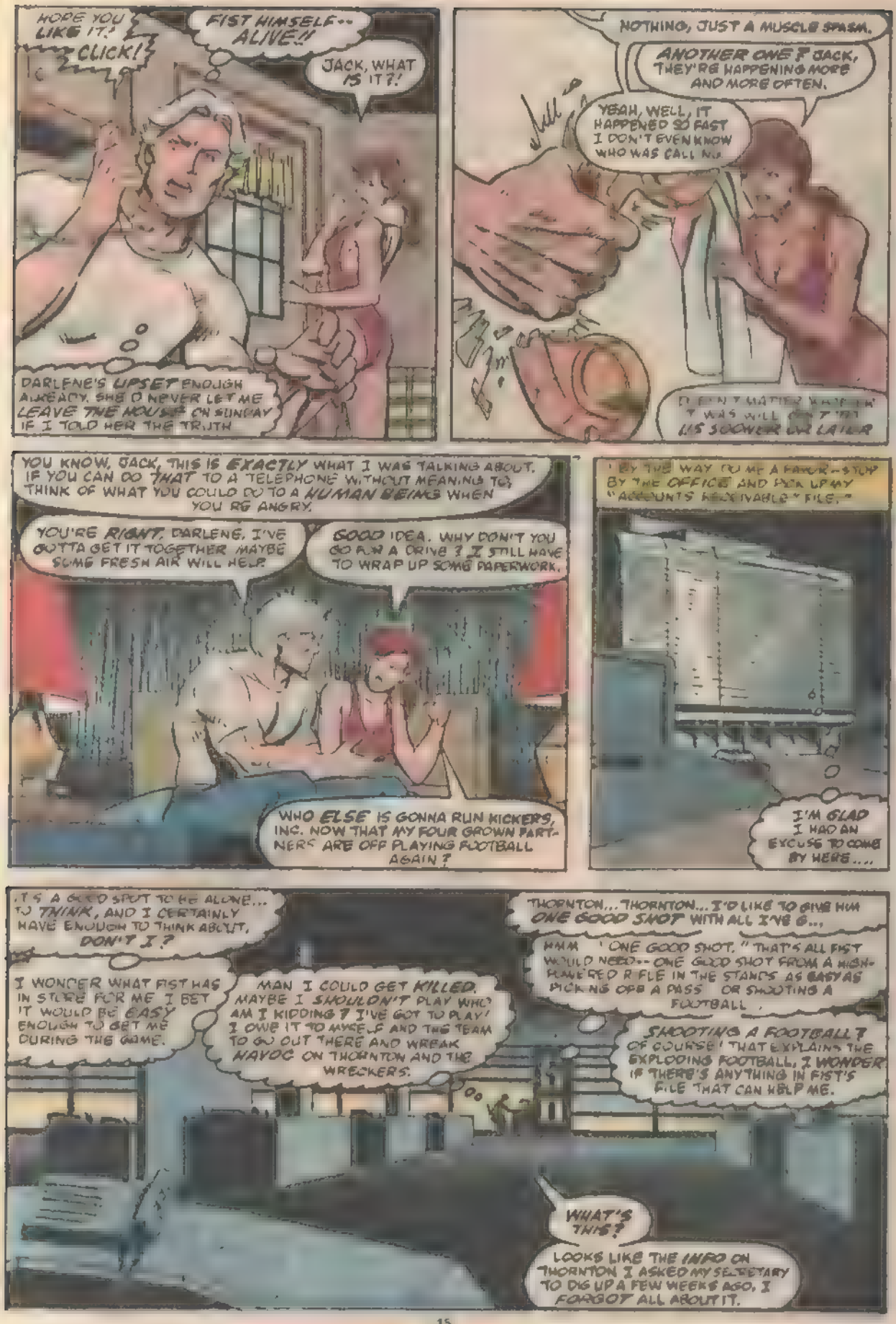
RRING

THEN JUST BE HONEST W TH ME, AND YOURSELF

HANG ON A MINUTE, HON.

HELLO?

EXPECT A "PRESENT" THIS SUNDAY SUPER-STAR!


HOPE YOU LIKE IT!
CLICK!
FIST HIMSELF... ALIVE!!
JACK, WHAT IS IT?!
DARLENE'S UPSET ENOUGH ALREADY. SHE'D NEVER LET ME LEAVE THE HOUSE ON SUNDAY IF I TOLD HER THE TRUTH
NOTHING, JUST A MUSCLE SPASM.
ANOTHER ONE? JACK, THEY'RE HAPPENING MORE AND MORE OFTEN.
YEAH, WELL, IT HAPPENED SO FAST I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO WAS CALLING.
DON'T MATTER WHETHER IT WAS WILL OR FIST. HE'S SOONER OR LATER
YOU KNOW, JACK, THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT I WAS TALKING ABOUT. IF YOU CAN DO THAT TO A TELEPHONE WITHOUT MEANING TO, THINK OF WHAT YOU COULD DO TO A HUMAN BEING WHEN YOU RE ANGRY.
YOU'RE RIGHT, DARLENE, I'VE GOTTA GET IT TOGETHER. MAYBE SOME FRESH AIR WILL HELP.
GOOD IDEA. WHY DON'T YOU GO FOR A DRIVE? I STILL HAVE TO WRAP UP SOME PAPERWORK.
WHO ELSE IS GONNA RUN KICKERS, INC. NOW THAT MY FOUR GROWN PARTNERS ARE OFF PLAYING FOOTBALL AGAIN?
BY THE WAY DO ME A FAVOR--STOP BY THE OFFICE AND PICK UP MY "ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE" FILE.
I'M GLAD I HAD AN EXCUSE TO COME BY HERE....
IT'S A GOOD SPOT TO BE ALONE... TO THINK, AND I CERTAINLY HAVE ENOUGH TO THINK ABOUT, DON'T I?
I WONDER WHAT FIST HAS IN STORE FOR ME. I BET IT WOULD BE EASY ENOUGH TO GET ME DURING THE GAME.
MAN I COULD GET KILLED. MAYBE I SHOULDN'T PLAY. WHO AM I KIDDING? I'VE GOT TO PLAY! I OWE IT TO MYSELF AND THE TEAM TO GO OUT THERE AND WREAK HAVOC ON THORNTON AND THE WRECKERS.
THORNTON... THORNTON... I'D LIKE TO GIVE HIM ONE GOOD SHOT WITH ALL I'VE G...
HMM... "ONE GOOD SHOT." THAT'S ALL FIST WOULD NEED-- ONE GOOD SHOT FROM A HIGH-POWERED RIFLE IN THE STANDS AS EASY AS PICKING OFF A PASS OR SHOOTING A FOOTBALL.
SHOOTING A FOOTBALL? OF COURSE! THAT EXPLAINS THE EXPLODING FOOTBALL. I WONDER IF THERE'S ANYTHING IN FIST'S FILE THAT CAN HELP ME.
WHAT'S THIS?
LOOKS LIKE THE INFO ON THORNTON I ASKED MY SECRETARY TO DIG UP A FEW WEEKS AGO. I FORGOT ALL ABOUT IT.

SOMETIME LATER .

WELL, THAT CERTAINLY DIDN'T HELP THORNTON'S GOT A WIFE TWO KIDS AND A MORTGAGE I SHOULDN'T BE SURPRISED - HE'S JUST A MAN.

HOW COULD I HAVE GOTTEN SO FAR AWAY FROM THAT?

AM I SERIOUSLY THINKING ABOUT KILLING A MAN? FIST MUST HAVE ME MORE SHAKEN THAN I THOUGHT DARLENE COULDN'T KNOW HOW RIGHT SHE WAS WHEN SHE SAID THAT CALLER WOULD "GET TO US SOONER OR LATER".

WHAT WAS THAT?

PROBABLY JUST THE JANITOR FIST HAS REALLY MANAGED TO INTIMIDATE ME HE'S GOT ME HEARING FOOTSTEPS WHEREVER I GO.

CLANG

"HEARING FOOTSTEPS"?

THAT'S IT!

NEW YORK, THE DAY BEFORE THE GAME .

WHOSE ARE THOSE BRUTES?

WHO KNOWS? WRESTLERS FROM THE CIRCUS, MAYBE?

WHERE'S MY ROOM KEY?!?

IT'S UGLY THORNTON! AND THE REST OF THE WRECKERS. LET'S GET SOME AUTOGRAPHS!

NO WAY! I DON'T EVEN WANT A ROOM ON THE SAME FLOOR AS HIM!

ER, EXCUSE ME, MR. THORNTON, SIR. A MAN LEFT THIS MESSAGE FOR YOU.

JUST GIMME IT, KID!

ARRG! WHAT IS THIS, SOME KIND OF JOKE?

YOU TELL THE WIMP WHO GAVE YOU THIS...

NEVER MIND, BOY--

--I'LL TELL HIM MYSELF!

LATER THAT NIGHT

432, 433, 434...

GLAD YOU COULD MAKE IT, THORNTON

I COULDN'T REFUSE MY FAVORITE *PINHEAD* A LAST REQUEST, *COULD I?*

I WAS COUNTING ON YOUR "*GENEROSITY*" TO BRING YOU HERE

YEAH WELL, I'M HERE

SO MAKE IT SHORT, "*MS.*" MAGNIFICENT!

SOME BUDDIES AND ME ARE GETTING TOGETHER TO WATCH *THE FILM OF OUR EXHIBITION GAME*. AND I DON'T WANT TO MISS THE *GOOD PART*. YUK-YUK

DON'T WORRY, THIS'LL ONLY TAKE A MINUTE. I WOULDN'T WANT TO SPOIL ANY OF YOUR *SICK FUN*

HERE *CATCH!*

WHAT *IS* THIS? YOU TRY N' TO *IMPRESS ME* OR SOMETHIN'? I DIDN'T COME ALL THE WAY DOWN TO THIS LOUSY NEIGHBORHOOD TO PLAY CATCH WITH A DUMBBELL, DUMBBELL!

"PLAY CATCH WITH A DUMBBELL, DUMBBELL." THAT'S PRETTY GOOD. YUK, YUK.

WELL, YOU SEE, THORNTON, I JUST WANTED TO SHOW YOU THAT...

...I'VE BEEN WORKING OUT...

?!?

JUST FOR YOU, PAL.

WHAT? HOW YOU DO THAT?

IT'S EASY

GOTTA BE SOME KINDA TRICK

READY.

HEY--

SET.

HOW CAN YOU .?

.. GO...

NOBODY'S THAT STRONG!

.. TOUCHDOWN!

YOU RE NOT HUMAN!'

STOP! HEY--! HOLD IT HOLD IT!

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU, YOU NUTS OR SOMETHING?

YOU COULD'A KILLED ME!

EXACTLY!

SEE YOU ON THE FIELD TOMORROW, 'PAL'

SMASHERS STADIUM--SEPTEMBER 7TH, OPENING DAY...
QUITE A GAME WE HAVE IN THE MAKING HERE TODAY, FOLKS. TWO OF THE BEST TEAMS IN FOOTBALL GOING AT IT ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE NEW SEASON!
AND ALL THIS IN THE MIDST OF THE FASTEST-GROWING RIVALRY IN FOOTBALL HISTORY!
THIS GAME SOLD OUT JUST TWO DAYS AFTER THE EXHIBITION BOUT BETWEEN THE SMASHERS AND THE WRECKERS--
GREAT! I'LL NEVER SPOT FIST IN THIS CROWD!
YOU ALL RIGHT, JACK? YOU LOOK JUMPY.
JUST THE USUAL PRE-GAME JITTERS, BRICK.
HEY, HAWKINS, GLAD YOU COULD MAKE IT!
GIVE 'EM ONE FOR ME, MR. MAGNIFICENT!
PRE-SEASON FANS WILL REMEMBER THAT "UGLY" MACK THORNTON PUT A VICIOUS HIT ON BILLY "HAWK" HAWKINS IN THAT GAME, RESULTING IN A PERMANENT SPINAL INJURY...
THORNTON, HOW'D YOU SLEEP LAST NIGHT?
READY FOR THE GAME?
HUH? WHAT?
MAGNICONTE STEPS BACK TO THROW--HE'S BEING RUSHED...
...HE FIRES A BULLET OVER THE MIDDLE!
YIKE! IT HITS THORNTON RIGHT IN THE BACK, KNOCKING THE LINEMAN DOWN WITH INCREDIBLE FORCE!
COULD IT BE THAT MR. MAGNIFICENT IS LETTING THORNTON KNOW IN HIS OWN WAY ... THAT HE HASN'T FORGOTTEN THE HAWKINS INCIDENT.
LET ME GIVE YOU A HAND UP...
...SO I CAN KNOCK YOU DOWN AGAIN!
STAY AWAY FROM ME!

OUCH! ANOTHER BLOCK BY MAGNICONTE ON THORNTON AND # 76 IS SLOW GETTING UP..
IT'S A QUARTERBACK SNEAK AND.. OW! MAGNICONTE PLOWS INTO THORNTON LIKE A FREIGHT TRAIN!
OH, EXCUSE ME, THORNTON.
SORRY, YOU KEEP GETTING IN MY WAY!
AND THORNTON IS SLOW GETTING UP AGAIN.
COME ON, GET UP! THE BEST IS YET TO COME!
KEEP AWAY!
WAIT! COULD IT BE..?

YES! THORNTON IS REFUSING TO GET UP! I DON'T BELIEVE IT!
THAT'S ENOUGH, JACK.
I SAID GIVE 'EM ONE FOR ME.
ENOUGH! ENOUGH! STOP, PLEASE, NO MORE!
I'M SORRY, I'M SORRY...

DON'T APOLOGIZE TO ME, THORNTON.
TALK TO HIM!
I'M SORRY, I'M SO SORRY, PLEASE, JUST...
DON'T LET HIM KILL ME...

I DON'T EVER WANT TO SEE YOU IN A FOOTBALL UNIFORM AGAIN-- UNDERSTAND, THORNTON?
NEXT TIME...
PROMISE.
I WON'T DO IT AGAIN...

FOR NOW, AT LEAST, IT LOOKS LIKE "UGLY MACK THORNTON WILL BE OF NO USE TO THE WRECKERS!

HA! GUESS THORNTON'S BEEN "86ed" JACK!

NOW I CAN CONCENTRATE ON FIST, IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME.

ALL THE SMASHERS HAVE TO DO NOW IS HOLD ON TO THE BALL AND MAKE A COUPLE OF FIRST DOWNS AND THEY'LL WRAP THIS GAME UP...

HURRY UP, GUYS, SET IT UP. LET'S RUN DOWN THAT CLOCK!

RELAX, JACK. THORNTON'S OUT AND WE'RE WINNING THE GAME. TAKE YOUR TIME.

1:49 LEFT TO GO... TIME ENOUGH FOR FIST TO MAKE HIS MOVE!

THAT'S IT! IT'S ALL OVER! THE NEW YORK SMASHERS WIN THEIR OPENER AGAINST THE AUSTIN WRECKERS BY A SCORE OF 14-6...

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! I'M STILL HERE! WHERE'S FIST?

♪ WE DID IT MYYY WAY... ♪

YEAH, TOUGH ENOUGH!

... WITH "DASHER" CORBIN SCORING BOTH TD's -- ONE ON A PASS BY MAGNICONTE AND THE OTHER ON A 96-YARD KICK-OFF RETURN...

I WONDER IF THIS IS HOW THORNTON FELT.

WHAT'S THIS?

WAIT A MINUTE! MY LOCKER! FIST COULD'VE PUT A BOMB IN MY LOCKER!

WELL, HERE GOES NOTHING...

HA! THE JOKE'S ON ME! FIST IS TRYING THE EXACT SAME PSYCHE JOB ON ME THAT I GOT THORNTON WITH.

GOOD LUCK, MR. FIST, I LIKE TO THINK I'M MADE OF STERNER STUFF!

THREE DAYS LATER...
KICKERS, INC. MAY I HELP YOU?
START AT THE BEGINNING, PLEASE, MA'AM. YOU SAY YOU SPOTTED A U.F.O? HAVE YOU TRIED CONTACTING THE AIR FORCE?
YES, MA'AM... UNNATURAL OCCURENCES ARE EXACTLY THE KIND OF PROBLEM WE'RE DESIGNED TO COPE WITH.
YOUR WIFE MAY WELL BE A MONSTER, SIR, BUT KICKERS, INC. DOESN'T HANDLE DIVORCE CASES...
KICKERS, INC. MAY I HELP YOU?
...DON'T WORRY, SIR, OUR PRIVATE OWNERS WILL SUBSIDIZE THE COST OF YOUR CASE ACCORDING TO YOUR INCOME...
HEY, SUICIDE, WAIT UP. I JUST HAD TO CHECK MYSELF IN THE MIRROR ONE LAST TIME BEFORE WE HIT THE TOWN.
KICKERS, INC. MAY I HELP Y--?
WHOA, SLOW DOWN, YOUNG MAN.
YOU SAY YOU'RE CALLING FROM WISCONSIN? MAYBE YOU BETTER LET ME SPEAK TO YOUR MOTHER FOR A MOMENT...
BUT THAT'S JUST IT--MOM IS GONE-- I HAVEN'T SEEN HER SINCE DAD CHECKED HER INTO THAT SPECIAL HOSPITAL LAST SUMMER--
HE TOLD ME IT WAS JUST FOR SOME TESTS OR SOMETHIN'-- BUT NOW THEY WON'T EVEN LET ME TALK TO HER ON THE PHONE--
I KNOW SOMETHING HAPPENED TO HER-- SOMETHING BAD! DAD WON'T TELL ME ANYTHING. HE KEEPS SAYING SHE'S SOME KIND OF FREAK AND SHE'S BETTER OFF WITH HER FREAKY FRIENDS NOW--
BUT SHE'S NOT, SHE'S MY MOMMY!
PLEASE-- I DON'T KNOW WHO ELSE CAN HELP ME--
NEXT ISSUE:
"THESE FREAKS ARE MADE FOR FIGHTING"
FEATURING DR 7